DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 283 188 CS 210 616

AUTHOR Stroughan, Dulcie Murdock
TITLE A Study of News Values and Their Effect on Reader Interest in Third World News.
PUB DATE Aug 87
NOTE 31p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (70th, San Antonio, TX, August 1-4, 1987).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Developing Nations; Higher Education; *Mass Media Effects; Media Research; *News Media; News Reporting; Reader Text Relationship
IDENTIFIERS Audience Response; *News Values; *Reader Preferences

ABSTRACT

A study examined whether the presence of certain news values, particularly those identified by Western journalists as important, affect reader interest in a news story. Timeliness, prominence, cultural proximity, and conflict, separate and in combination, were the four news values (independent variables) under study. The dependent variable, reader interest, was measured by the scored value of a manufactured news item. Forty sets of news items were created, each set consisting of an experimental item that included a news value or a pair of news values, and a corresponding item without the news value. Subjects, 240 undergraduates in three classes of an introductory mass communications course at a university in the southern United States, were divided into an experimental group, which read the news item containing news values, and a control group, which read the item with no values. All subjects then completed separate questionnaires on reader interest. Results indicated that the presence of news items containing conflict and proximity news values scored significantly higher in reader interest than items that did not contain those news values. Additionally, all combinations of the experimental news items, except for the combination of timely/prominent, were scored significantly higher than the control combination items. Results also showed a significant relationship between frequency of viewing television news (and reading newspapers) and interest in foreign news. Journalism majors and individuals who had visited foreign countries showed a slightly higher, but not significant, interest in foreign news. Generally, the respondents were more interested in reading news that concerned the United States or culturally proximate nations than they were in reading news about foreign countries. (Comprehensive tables of data and 38 references are appended.) (MEA)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED283188

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

A STUDY OF NEWS VALUES AND THEIR EFFECT ON READER INTEREST IN THIRD WORLD NEWS

by

Dulcie Murdock Straughan, Ph.D.
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Dulcie M. Straughan

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Presented to the International Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, annual convention, San Antonio, Texas, August 1987.
San Antonio, Texas, August 1987.

CS210616

"Markham Competition"

A Study of News Values and Their Effect on Reader Interest in Third World News

If an American college student were given a map of the world and asked to fill in the names of various countries, how many could he or she identify correctly? Results of a recent study of 2,200 college students' knowledge of world geography shows that he or she probably would not be able to identify many countries correctly (Kopec 1985).

Based on the study results, it is safe to assume that American college students would not fare any better if they attempted to identify developing nations. What limited knowledge and perceptions they do have about developing countries probably come from the mass media.

Third World critics of America's mass media lay the blame for Americans' lack of knowledge about the developing world squarely on the media's shoulders. According to those critics, the mass media in the United States virtually ignore the developing world. Furthermore, they charge, when developing countries doe make the news in American media, coverage is almost certain to be negative and biased.

Judging by results of recent mass media studies, Third World critics are correct in saying that American coverage of developing nations is small. There are a number of

reasons for this lack of coverage; this study focuses on one of them: the difference between what American and Third World journalists perceive to be news.

Media gatekeepers in the United States don't think their audiences are interested in foreign news, particularly news from what they see as little-known nations. According to former foreign correspondent John M. Hamilton, "There is something of an unwritten rule among journalists that local news is news and foreign news is foreign; that people want plenty of the former and will tolerate only small doses of the latter (1985, 14)."

This perception is caused partly by the fact that American journalists define news differently than do journalists from developing nations. As a consequence, American gatekeepers may reject stories written by Third World journalists because they don't fit the Western definition of news.

American journalists are trained to emphasize certain news values when writing a story, such as timeliness, prominence, conflict and proximity. The presence of these news values in a story may help determine whether a story will make it through the gatekeeper. It may also affect whether people read or listen to a story.

Some Third World journalists have argued that a new, development-oriented style of journalism is needed to cover news about developing nations adequately and fairly. Development journalism, as espoused by these journalists,

would emphasize the positive aspects of the development process in developing nations, rather than focus only on problems. It also would cover the evolution of progress, rather than focus only on timely events. And, it would feature everyday people, not just prominent individuals.

But would American readers be interested in development news that emphasizes different news values? Mass communication research shows us that while some studies have been conducted concerning the relationship between the presence of particular news values in a story and editorial choices, very few studies have examined the relationship between the presence of news values and their effect on reader interest. Only one study has looked at this question as it relates specifically to the Third World (Sparkes and Winter 1979).

This study attempts to shed more light on this issue, by conducting an experiment that compares reader interest in news items containing the news values of proximity, prominence, conflict and timeliness, with reader interest in news items without those news values.

Factors Influencing Coverage of Developing Nations

On July 13, 1985, the Live Aid concert was beamed around the world by satellite. A mammoth extravaganza designed to raise money for famine relief in Africa, it linked together "as many as a billion-and-a-half people in 160 countries..." (Newsweek, July 22, 1985) Not only was it

the largest concert ever held, it was important in two other respects: It made the idea of McLuhan's global village a reality by demonstrating the ability of today's communications technology to put people around the world in touch with each other. Previous events, such as the first landing of man on the moon and the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, had demonstrated that the world's people could communicate quickly. But the concert did something more--it focused attention on countries in the developing world--a rare occurrence in the West.

By Western journalistic standards, the Live Aid story clearly had the right stuff. It most certainly had impact--millions of people watching the same concert surely meets that criteria. Furthermore, it was timely, it was chock full of human interest, and it featured the most prominent names in rock music.

Although the Live Aid concert made a splash in American media, and hunger in African nations was a big story for about a week after the event (it was replaced as the top story just a week later by the news that President Reagan had colon cancer), Africa is seldom a topic in U.S. media. One reason is that very few American media organizations have staff permanently assigned in Africa, according to Segal (1976). Instead, most media rely on the wire services for news.

Consequently, the only news most Americans see or read about Africa is crisis-oriented, like the Live Aid follow-up

stories. Development news or feature news about African nations is seldom reported because of a "belief among American editors that their publics are not interested in feature stories from Africa unless there is a `cute' (e.g. "primitive") note to them: an animal touch or some other quaintness (Segal 1976, 53)."

But Africa is not the only region of the world neglected by American media; foreign news in general makes up only a small portion of the news menu on television and in newspapers (Riffe, 1982; Wilhoit and Weaver, 1983). Many foreign news stories never get past the wire service gatekeepers, according to Bishop; if they do get past the gate, local editors may opt to toss the stories rather than use them.

Television coverage of developing nations has increased, but many stories still emphasize conflict, according to a recent study by Larson (1984, 103). Similarly, Wilhoit and Weaver found that while AP and UPI had increased their coverage of the developing world, many stories involved conflict (1983).

Editor's perceptions of their audiences' interest in news of developing nations certainly has an impact on whether those nations receive coverage. But are these perceptions accurate? A 1977 Harris survey compared editor's perceptions of the public's interest in story topics with the public's stated interest. Forty-one percent of those surveyed (public) said they were very interested in

international news; only five percent of the editors said the public was very interested in international news (Bogart 1981, 240). And, in a 1982 survey of newspaper readers in four major U.S. cities, those surveyed ranked international politics as the second most interesting category of stories, with human interest stories receiving top ranking (Newspaper Advertising Bureau 1982, 6).

Although readership studies can provide some information about audience interest in international news, their value is somewhat limited because the definitions of foreign news and reader interest can vary from one study to the next. Also, reader interest surveys "have paid very little attention to foreign news as a discrete category and have seldom broken the category down any further (Sparkes and Winter 1979, 1)."

An area where research has been conducted is that of ascertaining what factors determine which events become news. A number of studies have focused on factors external to an event that may affect whether that event is covered by the media. Economic, political, geographic and social factors have been analyzed, with mixed results. Some studies have shown that elite nations get more coverage than non-elite nations; but the definition of eliteness may vary markedly from one study to the next (Kariel and Rosenvall 1984; Robinson and Sparkes 1976).

Other studies have found that cultural proximity between nations may affect news flow (Robinson and Sparkes 1976;

Hester 1973), but geographic proximity seems to have no impact on the amount of coverage one nation receives in another nation's media (Hicks and Gordon 1974).

The level of violence of events in Third World countries does not seem to determine whether American network news programs cover events (Cooper 1984).

Economic factors, such as a nation's GNP, or the amount of trade between two nations present an intriguing possibility to explain why certain nations receive more coverage than others, but conclusive evidence is not yet available (Kariel and Rosenvall 1984; Hester 1973; Hicks and Gordon 1974).

A second area of research has focused on factors intrinsic to an event that could affect why one event is chosen over another for news coverage.

News values have been recognized since "the Pulitzer-Hearst era of journalism (Snider 1967, 427)," but were not a topic of research until the early 1950s, when David Manning White (1950) examined how a wire service editor selected items from the wire for use in a newspaper. Snider replicated White's study 17 years later and concluded that more research needed to be conducted into "the old familiar news factors of proximity, timeliness, prominence, etc., to determine whether they are in fact still valid...(1967, 427)."

Much of the groundbreaking news value research has been conducted in Scandinavia by Galtung and Ruge (1965), Sande

(1971) and Ostgaard (1965). Galtung and Ruge asserted that there are a number of universal news values, such as impact, or size of an event; unusualness, and cultural similarity of the event with the audience, that help determine whether an event is seen as news. There also are four news values common only to Western nations: eliteness of nations(the more elite, the more coverage), conflict, prominence, and personal affinity with the event.

Results of their content analysis showed that the more distant a nation is from an event, the more likely it is that elite people's actions will be covered. Also, the more distant the nation, the more negative the reported event was. Galtung and Ruge concluded that, "Positive things that happen in the underdog countries will go under-reported and this will promote an image of these countries as being unable to govern themselves, and as inherently inferior to the topdog countries (1965, 82)."

British communication scholar Sophia Peterson continued Scandinavian research into news values (1979, 1981). Findings from her study of reporters' and editors' news choices support some of Galtung's and Ruge's hypotheses. Events that were unambiguous, unexpected or timely were more likely to be ranked by reporters as newsworthy (1979, 124). Also, items that were greater in scope, involved elite people or nations, or were negative, were rated as more newsworthy by reporters.

A later study by Peterson showed that personal elitism did not seem to affect news selection, nor did timeliness (1981, 153).

U.S. communication scholars have paid little attention to the question of whether the presence of certain news values has an impact on foreign news selection, or on reader interest in the news. One study, however, has compared what newspaper readers said was the type of coverage they wanted to see in international news with stories they specifically identified as interesting (Sparkes and Winter 1979). In a random survey of 240 people, individuals were asked to rate their interest in a number of manufactured news items, written and prepared to look like actual news clippings. Various news values, such as proximity and conflict, were present in the news items. Results showed that readers said they were more interested in stories that were written from the standpoint of the United States. The presence of conflict did not seem to increase reader interest, however.

Methodology

This study asked the following question: Does the presence of certain news values, particularly those news values identified by Western journalists as important, affect reader interest in a news story? Timeliness, prominence, cultural proximity and conflict were the four news values (independent variables) under study, as well as all

combinations of these four news values (timeliness and prominence, timeliness and proximity, etc.). Galtung and Ruge and others have suggested that the more news values and event contains, the more likely it will be seen as news by gatekeepers. This hypothesis was applied to reader interest for this study.

An experiment was designed to test the study question, because, as Sparkes and Winter noted, an experiment can provide "an interesting check on the validity for the marketplace of news values which have been hypothesized through news flow research or identified in communicator studies (1979, 1)."

The independent variables were operationalized as follows:

Timeliness: An event that happened today or yesterday.

Prominence: Defined as in Peterson's 1979 study. Name or title of the top leader of a county (head of state, prime minister, president) or a top government official (minister of cultural affairs).

Proximity: Defined as in Sparkes' and Winters' 1979 study, as cultural proximity. Western nations, including the U.S., defined as culturally proximate; non-Western nations as culturally non-proximate.

Conflict: Defined as violent events, crimes, confrontations, catastrophes, or threats of violence.

The dependent variable, reader interest, was measured by the scored value of a manufactured news item, with a

possible score value from 0 to 100. The method used to determine reader interest was developed by Haskins (1960). His method "has become applied across media and has become a familiar and accepted method to measure interest in media content (Stevenson 1973, 25)."

Haskin's title rating technique is very simple. A respondent is shown a drawing of an ordinary thermometer with values ranging from 0 to 100. The extreme values are always shown; intermediate values may be shown or left off. Respondents are asked to indicate their interest in reading an article, described with a short summary (sometimes with a title), by assigning the article a "reading interest score" on the scale. The respondent is told that if he is completely sure he wants to read the article, he should assign it a score of 100. If he is completely sure he does not want to read it, he should score it 0. If he isn't completely sure, he is told to score it using any number between 0 and 100. The optimum point for predicting likely readership of an entire article is an item score of 90 or above, but reader interest scores also can be used to determine relative interest among a number of items (Haskins 1960, 230). Also, the mean scores can be used to test for the significance of different stories, or, as in this study, Haskins' method can be used as the experimental manipulator of stories.

This experiment was designed with a control group, but no pre-test. Campbell and Stanley (1963) argue that a

pretest is not essential for true experimental designs. Randomization will suffice to assure that there are no initial biases between groups (1963, 25). Furthermore, randomization may be handled by a mixed ordering of materials to be distributed to respondents (1963, 26).

For this study, 40 sets of news items were created. Each set consisted of an experimental item that included a news value or a pair of news values, and a corresponding item without the news value(s). There were four experimental exemplars and four control exemplars for each variable under study, including the six combinations of the four news values. This provided a total of 40 experimental exemplars and 40 control exemplars.

An example of an item including the news value prominence follows:

President of Colombia Belisario Betanur met recently in Bogata with representatives of a newly organized farmers' union. (experimental item)

Representatives of a newly organized farmers' union in Colombia met recently with government officials in Bogata. (control)

Scores of the four experimental exemplars for each variable were averaged, and the average score was compared to an average of the four control exemplars. In this manner, if there happened to be one particular item that did

not provide a good measure of a variable, the averaged score would help mitigate any skewed results.

Using a random numbers table, two systematic samples were created by assigning each experimental item a number from one to 40, making certain that two of the four exemplars for each variable were assigned odd numbers and two were assigned even numbers. This number determined in which of two versions of the test the item would be placed, and its placement within that test version.

Each of the two versions contained 40 items, 20 of which were control items, and 20 of which were experimental.

Three classes of an introductory mass communication course at a Southern university took part in the reader interest experiment. A total of 244 test questionnaires were distributed. Of those, four were returned unanswered. The remaining 240 were complete, with 120 in Version I and 120 in Version 2.

Data were coded and analyzed using the t-test. SPSSX (1983) was used to run the t-tests.

Results

Student's t-tests and cross tabulations were calculated to determine if there were any significant differences between the groups on a number of descriptive variables, including age, sex, major, whether they had ever visited a foreign country, and media use variables. Results (see

tables 1 and 2) show clearly that there were no significant differences between the two groups on any of the variables.

Tables 3a through 3e present the average individual item scores, as well as the overall average score of each group of four exemplar items that measure each news value factor. These tables also present the item wording itself.

Results of this study show us that the presence of certain news values clearly has an impact on reader interest in news stories. Readers scored news items that contained conflict and proximity news values significantly higher than the items that did not contain those news values. However, there was no significant difference in reading interest scores between items containing timely and prominent news values and those that didn't contain these news values. Additionally, all combinations of the experimental news items, except for the combination of timely/prominent, were scored significantly higher than the control combination items. Tables 4a and 4b present the t-value and significance level for the individual items.

An examination of other data collected in the experiment also gives some insight into factors that have an impact on the level of interest in foreign news. Results show a significant relationship between frequency of viewing television news and interest in foreign news. There also is a significant relationship between frequency of reading newspapers and interest in foreign news.

There was no statistically significant difference between age and interest in foreign news, but most of the study sample were between the ages of 17-21. The results also show that although journalism majors reported a somewhat higher interest in foreign news than did non-majors, the difference was not significant.

Also, people who had visited foreign countries were more interested in foreign news than those who hadn't been abroad, but the difference was not significant. (See tables 5a and 5b.)

Discussion

Although results of this study can't be generalized to all Americans, or even to all college students, a composite portrait of this study group offers some valuable insights and suggests some directions for further study.

Like many Americans, the respondents were rather isolated from the rest of the world. Although half had visited a foreign country, their exposure was limited to less than a month abroad, most likely on vacation. Furthermore, those who had traveled abroad visited Europe more than any other area in the world. Personal experience with developing countries, then, is almost nonexistent.

Most of the respondents said they read the newspaper and watched television at least three times a week. They also reported a high interest in foreign news, although it

was rated lower than their interest in national news. They showed more interest in stories that involved conflict and culturally proximate nations, but the presence of elite people in a story or its timeliness didn't seem to make a difference in their level of interest.

Why didn't timeliness make a difference? It is possible that Americans are conditioned to expect timeliness in all stories, so that when an individual reads an item, he automatically assumes it is timely.

Prominence may not have been important to respondents' interest because of how it was defined for this study. While individuals may be prominent because they are heads of state, for example, they must be familiar to a media audience in order for their prominence to make any difference. The relationship between prominence and interest in news stories needs to be explored further, because earlier studies have produced conflicting results.

Respondents in this study, as in earlier gatekeeper studies, reported a higher interest in stories that involved conflict. Other recent studies have not found this (Sparkes and Winter 1979). This will continue to be an area of research interest, because one of the major complaints of some Third World mass media critics is that U.S. media place too much emphasis on conflict in their stories involving developing nations.

This study also showed that respondents were more interested in reading news stories that concerned the United

States or culturally proximate nations. Although journalists don't have control over the presence of conflict in an event, they do have some control when it comes to localizing a story. By emphasizing this news values in stories, journalists can make news about developing countries more interesting to American readers.

An example of this idea in action is a project currently underway in the United States and sponsored by the Sigma Delta Chi Foundation of the Society of Professional Journalists. Conceived by John Hamilton, a former foreign correspondent, the program shows editors and reporters how to find Third World/local links to stories, particularly economic ones. One of the studies in the project showed that after newspaper readers in Richmond, Va., and Hattiesburg, Miss., were exposed to stories about the connection between developing nations and their locale, the readers said they thought the developing world and the United States are growing more interdependent and that they were interested in reading about developing countries.

Other fertile areas for research into news values include examining the relationship between an individual's level of knowledge about the developing world and his interest in particular news values. Also, content analyses of stories about the developing world that appear in American media could be done to determine which news values are present in stories that make it through the gatekeeper.

Each year the number of American foreign correspondents get smaller. Fewer and fewer people are attempting to cover a world that becomes more complex each day. This problem is exacerbated by a general lack of knowledge of developing countries among American journalists. According to one television network official, none of the network gatekeepers has a special expertise in Africa, for example (Kalter 1986, 10).

There are a number of small daily and weekly newspapers in the United States that do not have access to a variety of wire services because they can't afford to subscribe to them. Lack of staff and money means fewer foreign news stories.

The structure of television news discourages coverage of development stories. With only 22 minutes to cover the news of the world each evening, television covers breaking stories that provide good visuals, not stories that provide background coverage of why something happened. While Live Aid stories touched Americans with their pictures of starving children in Ethiopia, few people learned why children there were starving.

By covering developing nations, and covering them in a way that will interest Americans, one hopes that knowledge of the developing world will increase. From that knowledge, problems can begin to be solved. Communication among nations is no longer just a technological wonder; it is a necessity.

TABLE 1 RESULTS OF RANDOMIZATION

	Group 1 n=120	Group 2 n=120	p value
Sex			
male	45%	42%	
female	55	58	p=.75*
	100%	100%	
Age			
Under 20	42%	42%	
20 & above	58	58	p=1.0*
	100%	100%	
Major			
Journalism	64%	74%	
Other	36	26	p=.15*
	100%	100%	
Foreign Visit			
Yes	50%	54%	
No	50	46	p=.59*
	100%	100%	

*chi square test

TABLE 2 RESULTS OF RANDOMIZATION

Weekly TV News Viewing (0-7 days)	4.18	4.24	p=.84**
Weekly Newsp. Readership (0-7 days)	4.31	3.91	p=.13**

**t-test, 2-tailed

TABLE 3a AVERAGE READING INTEREST SCORES

TIMELY	Total n=240	Test n=120	Control n=120
Scientists (today announced) (have announced) the discovery of a possible cure for AIDS...	90.25	90.33	90.18
Discussions (continue) on a location for the 1992 Olympics (opened today).	63.82	67.20	60.44
A new government program in Ethiopia (has begun) (began today)....	52.95	52.32	53.59
Halley's Comet (was sighted) (was sighted last night) by a group of amateur astronomers.	62.51	64.20	60.82
Total average score of 4 items:	67.38	68.44	66.38
PROMINENCE			
(The President) of Yugoslavia will preside over a week-long conference (There will be) a week-long conference....	35.26	34.04	36.48
(The Minister of Cultural Affairs) will officiate at opening ceremonies.. (Ceremonies will be held) to mark the opening...	23.03	21.29	24.77
China's (Premier Deng Xiaoping) (the Chinese government) has announced that it will provide...	39.49	37.14	41.84
(President of Colombia Belisario Betanur) met recently in Bogata with... Representatives of a newly organized farmers' union met recently with (government officials)	27.25	24.74	29.77
Total average score for 4 items:	31.25	29.27	33.14

TABLE 3b (continued)

	Total	Test	Control
Proximity			
(France) (South Korea) now employs more people...	41.54	40.65	42.44
(The U.S., Indonesia and Thailand) Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India) have signed an agreement to...	53.15	63.24	43.07
A six-month exchange program between engineering students at (Va. Tech) (Peking University) and the Univ. of Gambia began this August.	34.05	47.91	20.19
(Canada's) (Brazil's) Dept. of Tourism says that more tourists have visited...	29.62	39.04	25.32
Total average score for 4 items:	40.23	47.55	32.84
Conflict			
(Renewed fighting) recently broke out between Iran and Iraq... Representatives from Iran and Iraq are scheduled to meet soon to discuss (peace initiatives).	59.89	56.70	63.08
The Chad government says it has uncovered a (plot by the Libyan government to oust)... Government representatives from Libya and Chad met recently to (discuss) security issues between the two nations.	72.89	70.75	75.03
Civilian (fighting and looting) City broke out... Mexico City residents are still (working together) to...	40.41	51.12	29.70
Philippine dissidents have (threatened) to take over... A minority political party in the Philippines recently (requested) official party ...	49.33	58.80	39.86
Total average score for 4 items:	55.63	59.32	51.86

TABLE 3c (continued)

	Total	Test	Control
Timely/prominent			
(Pope Paul) (Roman Catholic officials) announced (today) that he (they) will visit five East African nations in 1986.	37.77	36.99	38.55
(Pres. of S. Korea Chu Doo Hwan) said (today) that his country's economic growth rate...The economic growth rate in S. Korea is now...	62.10	58.18	66.03
(The Pres. of N. Zealand) (The government of N.Zealand) (said today) (is considering) reopening its naval stations...	41.53	49.27	33.80
(PLO leader Yasir Arafat) (PLO representatives) (said today) (have agreed) to meet with the Israelis to discuss peace initiatives.	64.49	66.20	62.78
Total average score for 4 items:	51.47	52.56	50.28
Timely/proximate			
Gas prices across the (U.S.) (Argentina) dropped by about 2 cents per gallon (yesterday) (have recently)..	39.06	56.82	21.30
(British) (Pakistani) coal miners were granted across-the-board pay raises (today).	24.09	31.89	16.29
(The U.S. and Canada) (Brazil and Venezuela) agreed on a plan (today) (have agreed) on a plan to begin work on solving...	55.59	63.45	47.29
The (West German) (Japanese) govt.(has announced) (announced today) that it will cut its auto exports by 3 percent next year.	49.75	43.58	55.92
Total average score for 4 items:	42.12	48.93	35.31

TABLE 3d (continued)

	Total	Test	Control
Timely/conflict			
Mali and Niger (broke off) (have taken steps to improve) diplomatic ties (yesterday)...	31.47	36.44	26.50
Nicaragua (yesterday) (denounced) El Salvador for meddling in ... Representatives from Nicaragua and El Salvador (will meet) to (discuss) mutual concerns...	43.07	41.44	44.70
Shiite Muslims in S. Lebanon (attacked) Israeli occupation forces there (today), killing 21... Shiite Muslims in S. Lebanon (have ended) their attacks...	59.87	64.35	55.40
A (terrorist bomb) went off today at Kenya's major airport in Nairobi, (killing) 8 people... Kenya's major airport, located in Nairobi, (has reopened) after discussions ended between government officials and...	49.81	67.03	37.60
Total average score for 4 items:	46.05	52.24	39.83
Prominence/proximity			
(Pres. Mitterand) (government officials) of (France) (Sri Lanka) plan to visit...	59.64	58.73	60.55
(King Faud of Saudi Arabia) (govt. representatives) met with (Pres. Reagan in Washington) (Jordanian officials there)...	37.68	50.18	25.18
(Pres. Reagan) (government reps. from Peru) plan to visit Mexico to discuss...	45.43	57.00	33.67
(Margaret Thatcher) (Indonesia) has announced that (Britain) (Indonesia) has started developing new undersea oil fields...	44.95	50.79	39.12
Total average score for 4 items:	46.92	54.17	39.68

TABLE 3e (continued)

	Total	Test	Control
Prominence/conflict			
(Rajiv Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's son and new prime minister of India) (the Indian govt.) (has received death threats)...(is considering a new program that would monitor the safety of government officials...	58.37	53.85	62.89
(King Hussein) (Representatives) of Jordan (has warned) (met again) ...	63.32	62.00	64.65
(The daughter of Nigeria's president) was married last week amid reports of violence...(A state wedding) was held recently in Nigeria...	51.09	60.64	41.55
(Amid renewed fighting) (Pres. Botha) of S. Africa has denounced black leaders...Some of S. Africa's (black leaders) have (opened discussions) with govt. officials...	33.34	49.18	17.51
Total average score for 4 items:	51.53	60.82	46.85
Proximity/conflict			
National Guard troops in (Iowa) were called out to control rioting farmers... Farmers in (Bangladesh) are (meeting) with govt. agriculture officials...	38.11	52.78	23.44
Recent (rioting) in (England's) Brixton is the worst in that country's history.. Minority groups in (New Guinea) held a demonstration supporting recent govt..	59.90	67.73	52.08
(West German) members of that country's party have said...call for nationwide worker's (strike)... Members of the Congress party in (India) said they will (meet with) government reps. to ...	57.50	68.70	46.31
As (fighting widens) in El Salvador, sources say U.S. military advisers will...Govt. sources in El Salvador say that advisers from (Brazil) (will visit) El Salvador to help officials there set up a food program.	58.55	64.04	53.06
Total average score for 4 items:	53.51	63.35	43.35

TABLE 4a EFFECT OF NEWS VALUES ON READING INTEREST

News Value	Mean Score Experimental	Mean Score Control	t-value	df	1-tailed prob.
Timeliness	68.44	66.38	.51	238	0.30
Prominence	29.27	33.14	-1.22	237	0.01
Proximity	47.55	32.84	3.73	238	0.00*
Conflict	59.32	51.86	1.71	237	0.00*

possible score 0-100
*significant; 1-tailed probability

TABLE 4b EFFECTS OF COMBINATIONS OF NEWS VALUES ON READING INTEREST

News Value	mean (exp.)	mean (control)	t-value	df	p
Time/Prom	52.56	50.28	0.71	238	0.15
Time/Prox	48.93	35.31	4.34	239	0.00*
Time/Conflict	52.24	39.83	3.38	238	0.00*
Prox/Prom	54.17	39.68	4.65	239	0.00*
Prom/Conflict	60.82	46.85	4.00	238	0.00*
Prox/Conflict	63.35	43.35	5.49	238	0.00*

Possible Score: 0-100
*significant; 1-tailed probability

TABLE 5a MEAN READER INTEREST SCORES FOR TYPES OF NEWS

NEWS TYPE	
National	5.70
Other	5.17
Foreign	4.84
Economic	4.50
Sports	4.15

scale: 1=not at all interested
7=very interested

TABLE 5a EFFECT OF NEWS HABITS ON INTEREST IN FOREIGN NEWS

Foreign news interest	High use	Low use	t-value	df	p
Frequency of Viewing TV news					
	5.15	4.51	-3.37	227	.00*
Frequency of Reading Newspapers					
	5.13	4.61	-2.63	199	.00*

2-tailed tests, * significant

TABLE 5b EFFECT OF VISITS ABROAD, MAJOR, AGE AND SEX ON INTEREST IN FOREIGN NEWS

Foreign news interest:

Visit abroad

Yes	No	t-value	df	p
4.93	4.74	.02	226	.33

Age

(17-19)	(19+)	t-value	df	p
4.79	4.93	-.70	162	.48

Major

Journ.	no	t-value	df	p
4.92	4.69	1.14	143	.25

Sex

Male	female	t-value	df	p
4.98	4.74	1.20	220	.23

REFERENCES

Aggarwala, Narinder K. 1979. "What is Development News?" Journal of Communication 29: 180-181.

Bogart, Leo. 1981. Who Reads What, When, Where, and Why in American Newspapers. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Brooks, Brian S., George Kennedy, Daryl R. Moen, and Don Ranley. 1985. News Reporting and Writing, 2nd ed. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Campbell, Donald T. and Julian C. Stanley. 1963. Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research. Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co.

Cooper, Anne Messerly. 1984. "Third World news on network television: an inclusion/exclusion study of violence." Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Davison, W. Phillips. 1983. "Three audiences for Third World news." In Donald Shanor and Donald H. Johnston (eds.) Third World News in American Media. Columbia Journalism monograph No. 4.

Galtung, Johan, and Mari Homboe Ruge. 1965. "The structure of foreign news." Journal of Peace Research. 2: 64-91.

Hachten, William A. 1981. The World News Prism, Changing Media, Clashing Ideologies. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

Hamilton, John Maxwell. 1985. "The news of the world is right here on Main Street." Quill. 73: 14-17.

_____. 1986. Main Street America and the Third World. Cabin John, Md.: Locks Press.

Haskins, Jack B. 1960. "Pre-testing editorial items and ideas for reader interest." Journalism Quarterly 37: 224-230.

Hester, Al. 1971. "An analysis of news flow from developed and developing nations." Gazette 17: 29-43.

_____. 1973. Theoretical considerations in predicting volume and direction in international information flow." Gazette 19: 239-247.

_____. 1978. "Five years of foreign news on U.S.

television evening newscasts." Gazette 14: 86-95.

Hicks, Ronald G., and Avishag Gordon. 1974. "Foreign news content in Israeli and U.S. newspapers." Journalism Quarterly 58: 99-103.

International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems. 1980. Many Voices, One World. New York: Unipub.

Kalter, Joanmarie. 1986. "The untold stories of Africa: Why TV is missing some big ones." TV Guide, May 24. 2-12.

Kariel, Herbert G. and Lynn A. Rosenvall. 1984. "Factors influencing international news flow." Journalism Quarterly 61: 509-516.

Kopec, Richard J., Chairman, Dept. of Geography, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Personal interview, June 12, 1985.

Larson, James F. 1979. "International affairs coverage on U.S. evening network news." Journal of Communication 29: 136-147.

_____. 1984. Television's Window on the World: International Affairs Coverage on the U.S. Networks Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.

Newspaper Advertising Bureau. 1982. "The newspaper in readers' minds." Newspaper Readership Project. New York: New York.

Newsweek. July 22, 1985.

Ostgaard, Einar. 1965. "Factors influencing the flow of news." Journal of Peace Research 2: 38-63.

Peterson, Sophia. 1979. "Foreign news gatekeepers and criteria of newsworthiness." Journalism Quarterly 56: 116-125.

Riffe, Daniel, and Eugene F. Shaw. 1982. "Conflict and Consonance: Coverage of Third World in Two U.S. Newspapers." Journalism Quarterly. 59: 617-626.

_____. 1981. "International news selection by the elite press: A case study." Public Opinion Quarterly 45: 143-163.

Robinson, Gertrude J., and Vernone M. Sparkes. 1976. "International news in the Canadian and American press: a comparative news flow study." Gazette 22: 203-218.

Sande, Oystein. 1971. "The perception of foreign news." Journal of Peace Research 8: 221-237.

Segal, Aaron. 1976. "Africa and the United States media." Published by African Studies Association, Issue 6.

Snider, Paul B. 1967. "'Mr. Gates' revisited: a 1966 version of the 1949 case study." Journalism Quarterly 44: 419-427.

Sparkes, Vernone M., and James P. Winter. 1979. "Public interest in foreign news." Paper presented to the International Communication Division, Association for Education in Journalism.

SPSSX User's Guide. 1983. New York: McGraw Hill.

Stevenson, Robert L. 1973. "Cross-cultural validation of a readership prediction technique." Journalism Quarterly 50: 690-696.

Weaver, David H., and G. Cleveland Wilhoit. "Foreign news coverage in two U.S. wire services." Journal of Communication 31: 55-63.

Weaver, James B., Christopher J. Porter, and Margaret E. Evans. 1984. "Patterns in foreign news coverage on U.S. network TV: a 10-year analysis." Journalism Quarterly 61: 356-363.

White, David M. 1950. "The 'gatekeeper': a case study in the selection of news." Journalism Quarterly 27: 383-390.

Wilhoit, G. Cleveland, and David H. Weaver. 1983. "Foreign news coverage in two U.S. wire services: an update." Journal of Communication 33: 132-148.